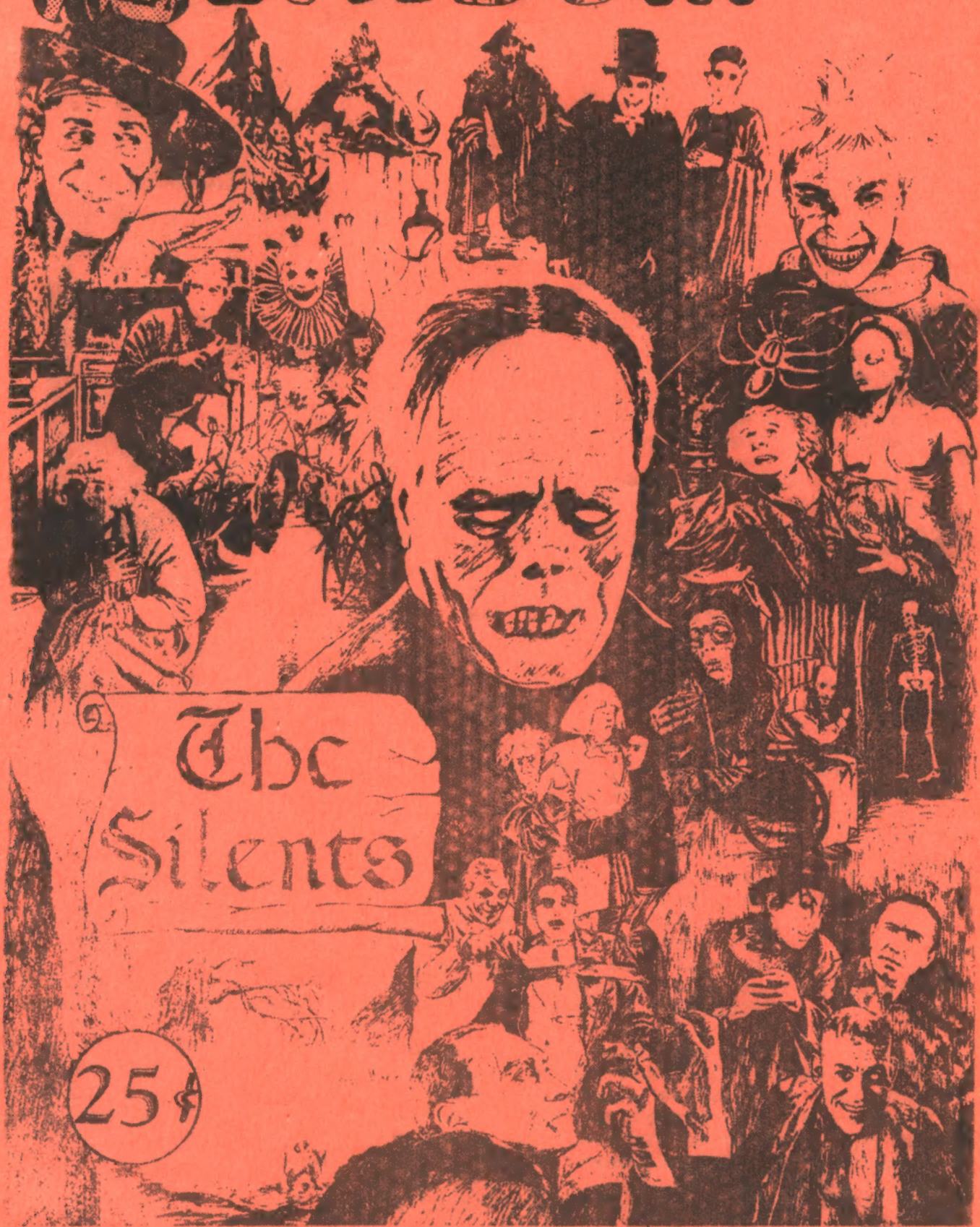
# WEIRDOM

Vol. 2 No. 3
July 1966



At the time I am typing this column, the entire issue (save for this editorial of course!) has been typed and printed. Now all that is left for me to do is cover about a dozen subjects in this column, type the stencils, paste in the logo, print them up, set the pages in order, fit them together, staple them, lick over a hundred stamps (eechk!), and send them out; I guess I'm not as close to victory as I thought!

I'm sure most of you will find that this issue is an improvement over the last. I have lined up many great articles and art this time around, and oh yes, you'll be happy to learn that I have included a letters column this issue. Please, when writing letters in the future, include a pic of yourself along with the LoC. Those mugs will be printed as a companion to the letters section, now called, "WEIRD LETTERS". And yes, one more thing, the printing will improve in time.

SPECIAL ANOUNCEMENT! Starting with the next issue, WEIRDOM will again undergo another radical change! Instead of movie and comic slanted articles, horror and science fiction amateur comic strips will make their way to WEIRDOM, with only a few, short articles remaining. I will be striving for horror and science fiction strips comparable to those appearing in the E.C. comics of the early 50's (that's some goal to shoot for!). As WEIRDOM need not abide by a Comics Code (or anything of that sort), no holds will be barred, thus you can expect new ideas in horror, science fiction, and a touch of satire here and there. Actually the main reason for this change is because I like this type of comic strip, and I have not seen one fanzine that covers this kind of material, and only a few that come close. WEIRDOM will endeavor to fill this gap in fandom; really! So I'll be seeing all you "little morbid monsters" in the next issue of this "nauseating muck-mag"! You won't want to miss the next "putrid issue" of WEIRDOM, filled to the brim with my own "collection of cadaverous cavortings". Is that E.C.'ish enough for you?!?

This new changeover in WEIRDOM also requires some "new talents" in the case of contributors. Fan Artists (preferably past E.C. illustrators) capable of illustrating revolting art from clammy scripts: WE NEED YOU! Also needed are crafty script writers (again preferably past E.C. staff members, ha!) and capable tracers for E.C. cover reproductions. So you see, you needn't sell your souls to obtain issues of WEIRDOM; just send

(cont. on next page)

in those scripts, story ideas, or volunteer to be chained to a drawing board for a week or so, turning out loathsome strips. Easier than you thought, huh?

As you might imagine,I'm an E.C. fan at heart, and for this reason, I was thoroughly pleased when I discovered a new E.C. reprint pocket book by Ballintine. The title is, TOMORROW MIDNIGHT; 5th in the Ballantine E.C. reprint series (not counting the MAD series), and second in the Ray Bradbury illustrated series. The cover again is by Frank Frazetta, and in my opinion, it is one of the best I've seen in a long time. Very imaginative can sum it up; I never tire of gazing at it. Actually, I was rather surprised to find that the contents are science fiction rather than horror stories. Since there was only one other science fiction reprint (Tales of the Incredible) and the last Bradbury collection was made up of horror stories, I figured the science fiction series didn't sell well (the same as the original comics) and thus I had my doubts about Ballantine returning with another collection of S.F. stories from WEIRD FANTASY and WEIRD SCIENCE. Well, I was wrong, and I'm glad. The art for the most part was superbly done by such greats as Wally Wood, Joe Orlando, Al Williamson, Jack Kamen, Will Elder, and John Severin. The reproduction is okay I guess, but you can't imagine how much is lost when the color is eliminated. If you ever get the chance, compare an original with a reprint, and you'll see what I mean. It's really a shame that few fen get to buy, or even read the original E.C. science fiction comics, classicly written and illustrated by the industries greatest. The demand for these mags is so great that you are lucky to get a middle 50's issue, even at the starting price of $1.25. Even if you have the money, these comics are rather scarse, and it's hard to find people to sell them for reasonable prices. I know because I have tried, and it seems that every time I make an order, my money is refunded because the comics I ordered had been previously sold (that's my sob story for this issue). The really sad thing about this is that these comics were (and still are for that matter) truly "classics" and there probably will never be anything published that can compare with them. Most of the copies most likely have been destroyed and the few that are still in existance are being hoarded by collectors. The result of course is that few fans are able to read these fabulous "Adult Comics". I just can't find words (choke) to describe how I feel on this subject. My only hope is that in about a dozen years, when E.C. classics start becoming public domain (in the case that they don't renew their copyrights, and I'm fairly sure that they won't) fan publications will reprint these classics in their original form, and possibly in color. May the Gods be with us! Well, now back to the book. With stories Ray Bradbury, art by E.C.'s greats, adaptations by the staff of E.C., and a cover by Frazzeta. . .how can this book fail? It didn't!

For those of you who are Dave Ludwig fans (you know, the guy that did this issue's cover!) I have good news for you. All future covers (or at least most of them) will be done by this talented gentleman. Actually, the originals are much more breathtaking (am I overdoing things a bit?) than the reproductions appearing on WEIRDOM covers. This is because electronic stencils just don't seem to pick up all of the details (and I can't afford offset). Those of you that are art enthusiasts, I have still more good news for you (here it comes!). Dave tells me that he has many originals (this issue's cover included) drawn in pen and ink on large, thick stock; and at reasonable prices too! For more information (and free samples) write to Dave Ludwig at: 17W Van Buren Street, Villa Park, Illinois, 60181.

(cont. on next page)

THE EDITOR'S HANGOUT, cont.

Well, it looks as if this year's TV season (and the the second season, and the third season, etc., etc., etc.) is over. Save for THE AVENGERS, (one of the best new shows this year) nothing but reruns gaze at us through the boob-tube from now until September. Looking back on this Season,(and the various sub-seasons) I would sum things up by saying that it was one of the best ever for science fiction, fantasy, secret agent, and super hero fans. Sure, there were a few duds, but I feel as a whole, most of the shows in the above catagory ranged from good to excellent. There was more of interest than merely the regularly scheduled programs. Take three specials: THE STATELY GHOSTS OF ENGLAND, THE BAFFLING WORLD OF E.S.P., and a SPECIAL REPORT ON FLYING SAUCERS. . .hmmmmmm. Then to add to our enjoyment, (this sounds like an advertisement) CBS, NBC, and ABC brought us three first run movies in color (THE TIME MACHINE, JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH, and THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND) to the evening television screen. And if these things weren't enough, to top the whole shabang off, a fantasy-comedy special, "WHO'S EVERET?" was also broadcasted. The trend of secret agents was definitely overdone, but I suspect it will become even more prominent next season, as will the new "super-hero" kick. About the only thing lacking this last season was a "straight science fiction" show, such as the "late great" TWILIGHT ZINE. Oh well, better luck next season. . . . and speaking of next season, I have heard rumors of the following TV shows: TARZAN, THE GREEN HORNET, THE GIRL FROM U.N.C.L.E., THE TIME TUNNEL, THE SHADOW, WONDER WOMAN, LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE, L.I.M.B.O. (a spoof on the Man From U.N.C.L.E. starring Dwayne Hickman of Dobbie Gillid fame some sort of science fiction theatre (the name escapes me at the moment) and an animated cartoon series, starring the characters from Marvel.

In case you may be interested, there are a few copies of WEIRDOM #8 left for 25¢ a copy. I also have a few copies of the SPECIAL FOR NAPA ISSUE OF WEIRDOM. This is an all ditto issue with lots of art, comics, etc., in the old WEIRDOM tradition (hoo-boy!). Copies are 15¢ each. I also have a very few copies of THE BEST (?) FROM WEIRDOM, the closest thing I can give you to back issues, as all the rest have been sold out. All copies are 5¢ extra if you want them mailed flat in protective envelopes.

Son-of-a-gun, there were a couple of fanzines I felt deserved special mention, and I wanted to plug them, but I see now I'm running out of space and have to cut this whole thing short. That's fanzine publishing for you! At any rate I know I have left many important topics unmentioned, but I want to get this blaimed issue out of my hair (and into the mails) before I leave for the 1966 WESTERCON in San Diego. I'll be going with Harold Sommerfeldt from San Bruno, so you can probably expect a couple of loquacious columns in the next issue, concerning the "going ons" in San Diego over the 4th of July weekend. Until then. . .

Weirdly yours,

R. C.

Publisher & Editor.....DENNIS CUNNINGHAM
Writers..JOHN DUVOLI--MARTIN RUSSEL--DONALD WILLIS--and.....BILL SPICER
ART.....DAVE LUDWIG(cover)....MARTIN RUSSEL...CHUCK ROGERS..JIM FARRELL

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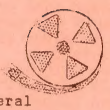
[Movie Dept.]

# 1966 MOVIE PREVIEW

## Part II, by JOHN R. DUVOLI



((author's note: The below films should be in general release before the end of 1966. In many cases, tenative release dates are listed after production information. While the below titles do not include all S.F. or horror releases (no article, no matter how well researched can be entirely accurate at this time) the films worthy of most note have been included.))

16. "Night The Creatures Came" Produced by Tom Blakely, Richard Gordon, and Gerald Fernbeck. Directed by Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Edward Judd, Nial McGinnis. Summer release tentative. //NOTE: John gives a preview review of this movie following this listing. Ed.//

17. "The OBI" A Richard Gordon Production. Written and Directed by Stanley Gouldner. Filming completed.

18. "Peer Gynt" (M.G.M.) A George Pal Production. Script by Ray Russel. Ready for filming.

19. "Picture Mommy Dead" (Embassy) A Bert I. Gordon Production starring Don Ameche, Wendell Corey. Near completion.

20. "Plague of the Zombies" (Fox) A 7 Arts-Hammer Production, starring Andre Morrell. Directed by John Gilling. In release.

21. "Prehistoric Women (7 Arts) A Michael Carreras Production. November release tentative.

22. "Projected Man" A Compton Films Production in association with John Croydon, Richard Gordon, and Gerald Ferbeck. Starring Byrant Halliday, Derek Farr, Norman Wooland. Written by Peter Bryan and John Cooper. Directed by Ian Curteis. Summer release tentative.

23. "Queen of Blood" (A.I.P.) A Curtis Harrington Production. Now in release.

24. "World of the Horribles" An Al Zimbalist-Byron Roberts production based on Jules Verne's "Hector Servadak". Ready for filming.

THE NIGHT THE CREATURES CAME

Screenplay by Edward Mann and Alan Ramsen. A Protelco Production in association with Planet Films. Running time: 87minutes. Photographed in color.

(Preview Review continued on next page)

(WEIRDOM MOVIE DEPT.; 1966 Movie Previews, cont.)

In a few more months, when we begin to look back over the years S.F.-Fantasy crop and begin to choose our favorites, this British made science fiction shocker should rate high on everyones list. Filmed last winter at Pinewood Studios in England, "Creatures" is one of the major efforts of the past few years. Preview screenings (I attended one in N.Y.C. last April) arranged by the films producers to test reactions have brought forth results and opinions more enthusiastic than anticipated which leads one to anxiously await the film's theatrical release (in September) to see if advance, most favorable reaction will mirror the reactions of the film-goer.

Briefly, "Creatures" concerns a team of scientists who battle one of the most terrifying menaces ever seen on the screen. Imagine if you will green, pulsating masses with deadly tentacle arms that assimilate men and double their number every six hours (meaning that in a weeks time there will be 1,000,000 of the creatures!). These then are the "Silicates", incredible spawns of a scientific experiment gone wild that terrorizes a small island off the coast of England; an island from which there is no escape!

Peter Cushing, a vetern of countless S.F. and horror films is the leader of the scientific expedition, while Edward Judd and Carole Gray plays major supporting roles. The real stars though are the Silicates. Created by British special effects ace John St. John, they are truly terrifying, and one could hardly ask for more realistic creations. Reg Wyler, who has photographed many a S.F. and horror thriller returns here and is as authorative with his camera as ever. Terence Fisher, S.F.-horror-dom's most well-regarded director took time off from his numerous assignments at Hammer to helm this thriller. All technical credits are first-rate and if we had to find one word to describe everything about this film, that word would be "class". With the exception of perhaps "Fantastic Voyage", "Night the Creatures Came" should emerge as the years major science fiction film.

One word of warning; don't begin to leave the theatre when it looks like the films has about ended. There's a double-shock surprise ending waiting for you.

Incidently, Gordon, Fernback, and Blaneley (producers of "Creatures") are joining forces for the production of two more major S.F. films: "Creatures From Beneath The Sea" and "The Brainsnatchers" for 1967 release.

—END—

Advertisement:

Attention all horror fans! Have you ever heard of the fanzine GORE CREATURES? If not, let me introduce you to this serious horror fanzine. Gore Creatures is an all ditto, digest size fanzine, published quarterly. It covers all fields of the horror (and S.F.) world. If you are a fan of Hammer Films, G.C. is especially for you because in past issues we had special "Scoops" and reviews of Dracula-Prince of Darkness, Rasputin, Plague of the Zombies, The Reptiles, and the current issue's One Million Years B.C., and Prehistoric Woman. Each issue has over 50 pages and is illustrated by Dave Ludwig, a college art major. Dave, our regular artist, will do at least 6 full page drawings, both covers (wrap around type), and a center fold montage. Send 25¢ to: Gary Svehla, 5906 Kavon Avenue, Baltimore, Marryland, -21206-

# Comprehensive Guide To The World's Greatest Monster movies--and Lesser Epics!!!

by Donald Willis

Rating Symbols:

E--Excellent

GE--Very Good

G--Good

FG--Fairly Good

F--Fair

FP--Somewhat Poor

PF--Pretty Poor

P--Poor, Definitely

T--Terrible

The ratings are followed by a consensus of critic's opinions.

1. THE FATAL HOUR. 1940. Monogram. Misleading title--the film lasts an hour and a half. The "3 Hour Murder Gimmick" fails to withstand and unrelenting bombardment of an avalanche of clinches. Most of the actors are sorely miscast as human beings; however they do become more believable as corpses. P. (P).

2. MONSTER FROM THE OCEAN FLOOR. 1954. Lippert. Inquisitive woman is menaced by octopus in diving helmet, another octopus, a shark, and horror of horrors, a cow! Rather dull during one long stretch (just between the opening and closing scene). The actors give the impression of having just been attacked by a squad of tsetse flies. P. (F).

3. ANGRY RED PLANET. 1959 Am-Int. Some adequately imaginative ideas, including an amoeba with revolving eyeball are crushed by odious dialogue and verminous direction. Performances range from the heroic suffering of Jack Khruschen, buried under a ton of "Sunnylines", to the heroic Nora Hayden's portrayal of a locomotor ataxia victim (an apt description, really) given to mumbling, "It's horrible. It's fantastic. Help, Tom!". My most embarrassing moment was when one character whispered: "I have the feeling we're being watched.". Was my face red! FP. (FP).

4. ASSIGNMENT OUTER SPACE. Am-Int. (Italian). Despite the usual difficulties in dubbing, many ingenious special effects, emotionalism, dreary philosophizing, constant reference to a "High Command", and an over-abundance of space ships and suits, this is a surprisingly interesting space movie. Its theme runs along this line: "Out in space, where men are men, and women few, it takes a heap o' disasters to unite two lovers". Ten free passes to "Fire Maidens of Outer Space" for the first person to send me a correct, intelligible outline of the plot—if there was one. F. (PF).

(cont. on next page)

(WEIRDOM MOVIE DEPT.; F.I.S.T.T.W.G.M.M.A.L.E. by Donald Willis, cont.)

5. PHANTOM PLANET. 1963. Am-Int. Space saga about an asteroid that moves around the solar system when its inhabitants choose to raise and lower their hands over a certain gadget. After the presentation of this logical technological advancement, the film gets a bit implausible. A lot of silly questions are asked that get sillier answers. Most of the dialogue, which can only be described as moronic, goes like: "You know--I don't like you."; "It's almost too quiet."; and "We of Earth should pay more attention to the beauty around us." One of the most glaring anomalies yet perpetrated in science-fiction occurs when a space girl tells the HERO that the strange fruit he is eating is "the equivalent of your breadfruit." Unless the two had just finished a dissertation on "The Qualities of the Breadfruit of Earth" (and I don't recall that they had), it is doubtful that the girl knew much about the subject. I must have missed a pivotal, informative scene. The Space Trial is no less testing of one's credibility. It comes complete with female jurors, a judge, and a sort of prosecuting attorney, (although he is never called that, for fear of becoming procestasorus). The Big Attack is a landmark in Space Flight; I can't be too sure, but I think the Creatures flew by the asteroid in orange crates. See it to believe it; this is really funny! This must have been an intentional comedy; if so, it would be the best satire on S.F. yet. I can hardly wait to see it again. Highly recommended. T. (P).

6. BEAST WITH A MILLION EYES. 1956 ARC (AI?) How can I describe this? How can one describe a motion picture experience so vivid that words seem inadequate? How?—by using such words as...putrescent... nauseating...repulsifying...stomach-upheavaling...wretched...? Yes, very easily in fact. T. (P).

7. BRAIN FROM PLANET AROUS. 1958 Allied Artists. A couple of monsters play planetary hide-and-seek. One-- who likes to neck a lot is a fugitive from Arous and lands on Earth at, of all places, Mystery Mountain. This coincidence gives the picture more of an air of uh....mystery. The unintended comic highlight occurs when the hero rams his jeep into a pile of rocks and keenly observes: "Well, I guess we can't go on any further in the jeep." And once again, our armed forces are given a solid vote of confidence with: "The Army could do no good." The acting peeves one, a picturesque location is generally wasted, and about the greatest expense incurred is the exciting explosion of a model airplane, trying out for the part of a jet airliner. FP. (FP).

—END—


WEIRDOM AD RATES

At the present time, over 150 copies of WEIRDOM go to fans all over the nation, and throughout the world. Why not advertise in WEIRDOM? Someone may even buy what you are selling! The rates are as follows: 50 words: 25¢.....¼ page:50¢.....½ page: 85¢.....3/4 page: $1.25.....full page: $1.60.....2 pages: $3.00.....ready sheets are 75¢ per page (160 copies should be sent for the next issue).


////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////////

Doc Defiant
NO WAIT!
THE LAST JOB YOU'RE GOING TO BLOW! DOC DEFIANT'S NO EXCUSE FOR RINGING THE ROBBERY!
WAIT, BOSS! I GOT THE
ONE OF MY OLD CONNECTIONS I HIRED SOMEBODY TO BUMP HIM OFF! HE'LL BE HERE SOON!
BOSS! THE WINDOW

I CAME BY TO DECIDE IF I WOULD ACCEPT, FATTY!
WHEN I HAND YOU DEFIANT'S HEAD, I'LL EXPECT $100,000 CASH
NOW WE GO TO THE STATELY MANSION OF EX-ACTOR EDWARD HOLLAND, BETTER KNOWN AS DOCTOR DEFIANT!
THAT'S THE LAST ADJUSTMENT I'LL
IMPULSES PERFECTLY!
-ITHOUT THEM I'D
AND HELPLESS.
ALWAYS GLAD TO HELP AN INVALID!
CAN BREAK A TABLE IN HALF!!

OKAY! BUT WHAT I DON'T
SEE IS WHY YOU HAD
ME DESIGN YOU
ANOTHER COSTUME
EVEN MORE RIDICULOUS
THAN THE FIRST!
ZOINK
Color
WHERE THE ACTION BEGINS!
PREPARE TO DUEL
YOUR DOOM!
DANGED IF I KNOW!
BUT THERE'S GONNA
BE A FIGHT, AND I'M
GAME!
OH GOODY! IT ISN'T

A CHANCE!
NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT I'M UP AGAINST, LET ME TEACH YOU!
WHOOPS! THERE GOES THE PICTURE WINDOW!

I HAVE NO MORE TIME TO
OOMPH!
BOY, ARE MY PUNCHES RUSTY! AND HERE COMES COMMANDER BLACKHEAD TO FINISH ME OFF!
I'D BETTER THINK A BETTER DEFENSE THAN A GARBAGE

HAH! WAIT TILL HE TRIES FLIPPING ME FORWARD!
YOUR HANDS ARE METAL, BUT I'VE TRAINED MY WHOLE BODY TO RESIST THE BLOWS OF COMBAT AS IF IT WERE METAL,
DO NOT BOTHER PLEADING FOR MERCY, FOR YOUR EFFORTS WOULD BE FUTILE! LET ME KEEP THIS AS PAINLESS AS POSSIBLE
THE BATTERY CELLS IN MY ARMS ARE WEAKENING! I GO DOWN, BUT I'LL HAVE ONE LAST SURPRISE!

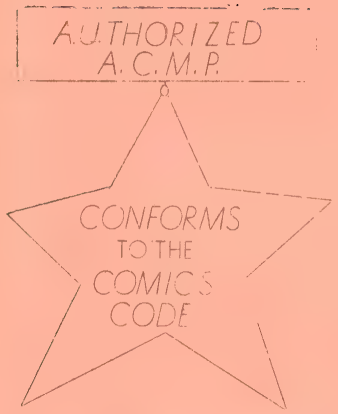
HE'S UNCONSCIOUS! ONE SIMPLE BASH TO HIS SKULL, AND MY JOB IS OVER!

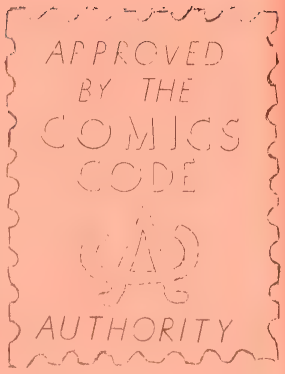
MY HANDS ARE TRAPPED IN DEFIANT S GRIPS! I CANNOT GET FREE! WHY? WHY?

AND NOW THE POLICE ARE COMING! I'M TRAPPED! I'VE DEFEATED HIM, BUT TO NO

MECHANICAL ARMS, THE JOINTS LOCK IN POSITION!

WELL, HOW DID YOU LIKE DOC'S ADVENTURE? DROP US A LINE, C/O LON MITCHELL / 4340 BERWICK / TOLEDO, OHIO 43612. (EDITOR OF HIS GREAT MAG, BLOOD AND THUNDER) AND OLD DENNIS WILLING, WE'LL BE BACK SOON IN WEIRDOM! DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!




# COMIC BOOKS CONTROVERSY CRISIS AND CENSORSHIP

By BILL SPICER

(Certain portions prepared with information taken from "LEGISLATIVE PROBLEMS" copyright 1953 by the Bureau of Public Administration, and California University.)

In 1954, the year that saw formation of the CMAA and the Comics Code, criticism of the comic book industry was at its highest level. In addition to those who advocated regulation or censorship of comics, there were some who defended the industry and spoke out against censorship and regulation. The following is a list of the arguments that were frequently presented by both sides of the controversy.

# In Favor of Comic Book Censorship

1. Comic books overstimulate the unstable child and exert a powerful adverse effect upon the uncritical minds of all children.

2. Comics make criminals and criminal acts attractive and produce sympathy for both the crime and the criminal as opposed to law and justice.

3. Comic books frequently belittle traditional American social political institutions. Some foster prejudice against class, race, creed, and nationality.

4. The use of obscenity, vulgarity, profanity, and underworld slang by comic books is harmful.

5. Comics make children and many adults impatient with good literature and its method of presentation, thus threatening the literary culture of our society.

6. Artwork, printing, and color are frequently of such poor quality as to be physically injurious to the eyes of the reader.

7. Crime and horror comics are sadistic, masochistic, vicious, and compromise accepted moral standards.

Frederick Wertham: (former director of the mental hygiene clinics, Bellevue & Queens Hospital.)

"The atmosphere of crime comic books is unparalleled in the history of children's literature of any time or any nation. It is the distillation of viciousness. The world of the comic book is the world of the sadist, the ruthless, the bluffer, the shrewd deceiver, the torturer, and the thief. All the emphasis is on exploits where somebody takes advantage of somebody else, violently, sexually, or threateningly. It is no more the world of braves and squaws, but one of punks and molls. Force and violence in any conceivable form are romanticized. Constructive and creative forces in children are channeled by comic books into destructive avenues. Trust, loyalty, confidence, solidarity, sympathy, [illegible], compassion are ridiculed. Hostility and hates set the pace [illegible] every story. A natural scientist who had looked over comic [illegible] expressed this to me tersely: In comic books, life is worth nothing, there is no dignity of a human being."

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

Reginald Steen (veteran psychiatrist and consultant.)

"The sadistic type of comic book is, in my opinion, harmful to all children and to certain unstable, immature adults. It is harmful to the emotionally immature and to children in that it may create fear and anxiety and cause emotional tension which in later years may show itself as psychoneurosis in adult life....other children and unstable individuals will be led into life of delinquency or crime.....the more timid... would be led into emotional tensions, fear and predisposition to psychneurosis."

J. Edgar Hoover (chief of the FBI)

"Crime books, comics, and other stories packed with criminal activity and presented in such a way as to glorify crime and the criminal may be dangerous, particularly in the hands of an unstable child. A comic book which is replete with lurid and macabre; which places the criminal in a unique position by making him a hero; which makes lawlessness attractive; which ridicules decency and honesty; which leaves the impression that graft and corruption are necessary evils of American life; which depicts the life of the criminal as exciting and glamorous, may influence the susceptible boy or girl who already possesses anti-social tendencies."

## Opposed to Comic Book Censorship.....

1. Comics act as a catharsis and provide a "release" for aggressive behavior.

2. Comics are educational and provide both entertainment and amusement.

3. There are both "desirable" and "undesirable" comic books. Only a small percentage of the total are harmful and they are produced by small independent publishers.

4. Comics have the approval of many psychiatrists, educators, psychologists, and other authorities on child development.

5. The "penny dreadfuls", detective stories, and spine-chillers of past generations had little or no effect on juvenile delinquency.

6. Anti-social behavior results only if the individual is neurotic, disturbed, or unstable. Comics do not develop unhealthy sex attitudes, masochism, sadism, or frigidity.

7. The public can exercise freedom of choice in its selection of reading material. Any form of censorship is a violation of the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and of the press.

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

J. M. Thrasher (professor of education, N.Y.U.):

"...no acceptable evidence has been produced by Wertham or anyone else for the conclusion that the reading of comic magazines has or has not a significant relation to delinquent behavior. The danger adherent in the present controversy in which forensic argument replaces research, is that having set up a satisfactory 'whipping boy' in comic magazines, we fail to face and accept our responsibility as parents and as citizens for providing our children with more healthful family and community living, a more constructive developmental experience."

Mandel Sherman (professor of educational psychology, University of Chicago):

"...I have never seen one instance of a child whose behavior disturbance originated in the reading of comic books, nor even a case of a delinquent whose behavior was exaggerated by such reading. A child may ascribe his behavior to a comic he has read or a movie he has seen, but such explanations cannot be considered scientific evidence of causation.

Edwin J. Lucas (Director of the Society for the Prevention of Crime):

"I am unaware of the existence of any scientifically established causal relationship between the reading of comic books and delinquency. It is my feeling that efforts to link the two are an extension of the archaic impulse by which, through the ages, witchcraft, evil spirits, and other superstitions have in turn been blamed for anti-social behavior."

**********

## Association of Comic Magazine Publishers (ACMP)

A concerted effort to establish an industry-wide program of self-regulation was made in 1948 when representatives of the comic book industry organized the A.C.M.P., and agreed to a code of minimum standards which stipulated:

1. Sexy, wanton comics should not be published. No drawing should show a female indecently or unduly exposed, and in not even more nude than in a bathing suit commonly worn in the United States of America.

2. Crime should not be presented in such a way as to throw sympathy against law and justice, or to inspire others with the desire for imitation. No comics shall show the details and methods of a crime committed by a youth. Policemen, judges, government officials, and respected institutions should not be portrayed as stupid or ineffective, or represented in such a way as to weaken respect for established authority.

3. No scenes of sadistic torture should be shown.

4. Vulgar and obscene language should never be used. Slang should be kept to a minimum and used only when essential to the story.

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

5. Divorce should not be treated humerously, or represented as glamorous or alluring.

6. Ridicule or attack on any religious or racial group is never permissable. The association anticipates the support of all publishers in its effort to enforce the minimum editorial standards of the comics code.

Phil Keenan, president of the ACMP, commented, "...we are on trial in the court of public opinion. Our defense is this code of minimum editorial standards designed to result in the production of comic magazines which are interesting, exciting, dramatic....and clean!"

A board of experts, composed of educators, was appointed to review comic books and stamp those which conformed to the code with a seal of approval. However, no penalty was invoked against members for violation of the code. In addition, the better publishers took individual corrective action towards their own products.

Internecine warfare within the association soon resulted in the withdrawal of several of the larger publishers, and the established procedures of censorship were discarded.

Within two years the organization became **ineffective.**

((According to Henry E. Schutz, general counsel, ACMP, the members of the association included: The Aromium Service Company, Lev Gleason Publications, Famous Funnies, Hillman Periodicals, Parents' Institute, McCombs Publications, The Golden Willow Press, Avon Periodicals, Ace Magazines, Orbit Publications, Superior Comics, and Consolidated Magazines. About 90 percent of the industry joined in developing the code; one-third of the industry were members of the ACMP when Schultz began working with the organization in 1948, and by 1954, only three publishers, several distributors, and some printers—about a dozen in all, remained members.))

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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

## VOLUNTARY SELF-REGULATION BY THE COMICS INDUSTRY

(1) The Comics Magazine Association of America (CMAA)

(2) The Comics Code Authority (CCA)

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

The Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc., was founded in 1954 with the objective of raising the standards of comic magazines in increasingly higher levels through the medium of an industry self-regulation program. Consisting of 90% of all publishers, distributors, printers, and engravers engaged in the industry, the CMAA at its inception adopted as the cornerstone of its program the most stringent Code in existence for any communications media.

To insure strict adherance to the Code, the Comics Code Authority (CCA) was established, headed by a Code Administrator with power to exercise independent judgment, who assisted by a staff of reviewers, studies and passes upon all reading and pictorial matter, including advertisements, intended for publication in all the comic magazines published by CMAA members.

## How The CCA Operates....

The code is a set of principles and regulations, and in this respect may be compared to any statute or set of regulations of an administrative body, except, of course, that the Code is voluntary and constitutes "self regulation" by the industry. Such "self regulation", representing as it does the collective sense of responsibility of the people who constitute an industry, has proved to be the most practical and expiditious method of control. But just as any statute must constantly be interpreted and applied to actual situations, it requires the services of a human agency. Therefor, the Comic Code Authority, headed by an administration, has been established to give practical applications to the Code.

It is the duty of the Code administrator and her staff, which consists of qualified women, to review the contents of every comic book to be published by members of the CMAA prior to its publication, and pass upon each phase of it in the light of the Code.

The questions to be decided are these:

"Does the story or the advertisement conform to the basic requirements of the Code?"

"If so, does it violate the Code in any detail?"

The basic principle underlying the operation of the Code Authority is this: the review of the complete contents of a comic magazine before it is printed, by an agency (the Code Authority) which operates apart from the individual publisher and which exercises independent judgment on whether or not the material meets the high standards of morality, decency, and good taste as enunciated by the Code.

This material is submitted by the publisher to the office of the Code Authority several months before the publication date, in its original form—that is, on "boards" bearing the artist's original black and white drawings and lettering, no engravings or printing plates having as yet been made. Thus, revisions and corrections as suggested by the reviewers and the administration may be made expeditiously.

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

Each "board" is a page, and the reviewers carefully check the proposed magazine page-by-page, against the provisions of the Code. The propriety of the story as a whole receives basic consideration and may be rejected in its entirety if it is contrary to the overall principle and spirit of the Code. Once the story or the advertisement meets the underlying requirements, the pages are studied in detail. The physical appearance of the characters depicted, the language used, the action portrayed, are all carefully considered. Should any such detail require correction, in the opinion of the Code Authority, the boards are returned to the publisher with the required changed noted. Frequently, the reviewer will speak to the editor, author, or artist, further explaining the reasons for the decision, and thereby incidentlly creating a better understanding of the Code in the mind of the creator of the book. Sometimes the artist comes to the office of the code Authority, where drawing facilities and materials are available, and makes the necessary corrections on the spot.

Each individual page, including covers and advertisements, must receive an official stamp of approval, signed by the reviewer, and this stamp is not affixed until the "board" has been resubmitted (in the event of changes that had been ordered) in final acceptable form, exactly as it will appear in print. After such stamp of approval is impressed upon the original boards, corrections are micro-filmed, so that the printed book when it appears may be checked to insure conformity with the revisions as ordered.

The Code Authority's seal on the upper right hand corner of the approved publication may be used by the publisher only after the above-described procedure has taken place. Its appearance on the comic magazine thus provides an assurance to parents that the contents adhere in every particular to the tenets to the Code.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE:

## "CCA Code for Editorial Matter"

GENERAL STANDARDS PART A

1) Crimes shall never be presented in such a way as to create sympathy for the criminal, to promote distrust of the forces of law and justice, or to inspire others with desire to imitate criminals.

2) No comics shall explicitly present the unique details and methods of a crime.

3) Policemen, judges, government officials, and respected institutions shall never be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority.

4) If crime is depicted, it shall be as a sordid and unpleasant activity.

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

5) Criminals shall not be presented so as to be rendered glamorous or to occupy a position which creates a desire for emulation.

6) In every instance good shall triumph over evil and the criminal punished for his misdeeds.

7) Scenes of excessive violence shall be prohibited. Scenes of brutal torture, excessive and unnecessary knife and gun play, physical agony and gruesome crime shall be eliminated.

8) No unique or unusual methods of concealing weapons shall be shown.

9) Instances of law enforcement officers dying as a result of a criminal's activities should be discouraged.

10) The crime of kidnapping shall never be portrayed in any detail, nor shall profit accrue to the abductor or kidnapper. The criminal or the kidnapper must be punished in every case.

11) The letters of the word "crime" on a comics magazine shall never be appreciably greater in dimension than the other words contained in the title. The word "crime" shall never appear alone on a cover.

12) Restraint in the use of the word "crime" in titles or sub-titles shall be exercised.

GENERAL STANDARDS PART B

1) No comic magazine shall use the word "horror" or "terror" in its title.

2) All scenes of horror, excessive bloodshed, gory or gruesome crimes, depravity, lust, sadism, masochism shall not be permitted.

3) All lurid, unsavory, gruesome illustrations shall be eliminated.

4) Inclusion of stories dealing with evil shall be used or shall be published only where the intent is to illustrate a moral issue and in no case shall evil be presented alluringly nor so as to injure the sensibilities of the reader.

5) Scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with walking dead, torture, vampires and vampirism, ghouls, cannibalism and werewolfism are prohibited.

GENERAL STANDARDS PART C

All elements or techniques not specifically mentioned herin, but which are contrary to the spirit and intent of the Code, and are considered violations of good taste or decency, shall be prohibited.

DIALOGUE

1) Profanity, obscenity, smut, vulgarity, or words or symbols which have acquired undesirable meanings are forbidden.

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

2) Special precautions to avoid reference to physical afflictions or deformities shall be taken.

3) Although slang and colloquialisms are acceptable, excessive use should be discouraged and wherever possible good grammar shall be employed.

RELIGION

1) Ridicule or attack on any religious or racial group is never permissable.

COSTUME

1) Nudity in any form is prohibited, as indecent or undue exposure.

2) Suggestive and salacious illustration or suggestive posture is unacceptable.

3) All characters shall be depicted in dress reasonably acceptable to society.

4) Females shall be drawn realistically without exaggeration of any physical qualities.

NOTE: It should be recognized that all prohibitions dealing with costume, dialogue or artwork applies as specifically to the cover of a comic magazine as they do to the contents.

MARRIAGE AND SEX

1) Divorce shall not be treated humorously nor represented as desirable

2) Illicit sex relations are neither to be hinted at or portrayed. Violent love scenes as well as sexual abnormalities are unacceptable.

3) Respect for parents, the moral code, and for honorable behavior shall be fostered. A sympathetic understanding of the problems of love is not a license for morbid distortion.

4) The treatment of love-romance stories shall emphasise the value of the home and the sanctity of marriage.

5) Passion or romantic interest shall never be treated in such a way as to stimulate the lower and baser emotions.

6) Seduction and rape shall never be shown or suggested.

7) Sex perversion or any inference to same is strictly forbidden.

CODE FOR ADVERTISING MATTER

These regulations are applicable to all magazines published by members of the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc. Good taste shall be the guiding principle in the acceptance of advertising.

1) Liquor and tabacco advertising is not acceptable.

(cont. on next page)

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

2) Advertisement of sex or sex instruction books are unacceptable.

3) The sale of picture postcards, "pin-ups", "art studies", or any other reproduction of nude or semi-nude figures is prohibited.

4) Advertising for the sale of knives, or realistic gun facsimiles is prohibited.

5) Advertising for the sale of fireworks is prohibited.

6) Advertising dealing with the sale of gambling equipment or printed matter dealing with gambling shall not be accepted.

7) Nudity with mertricious purpose and salacious postures shall not be permitted in the advertising of any product; clothed figures shall never be presented in such a way as to be offensive or contrary to good taste or morals.

8) To the best of his ability, each publisher shall ascertain that all statements made in advertisements conform to fact and avoid misrepresentation.

9) Advertisement of medical, health, or toiletry products of questionable nature are to be rejected. Advertisements for medical, health or toiletry products endorsed by the American Medical Association, or the American Dental Association, shall be deemed acceptable if they conform with all otor conditions of the advertising code.

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# An Interview With

# LEONARD DARVIN

(EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE COMICS MAGAZINE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA)

//Questions submitted by Bill Spicer and Bob Butts//

1) Is the present CMAA "Code for Editorial Matter" identical with the one formulated in 1954, or has it been altered in any way since then?

THE CODE IS EXACTLY THE SAME AS ADOPTED IN 1954.

2) Some classic novels contain themes or sequences which, according to the "Code for Editorial Matter" are not acceptable. Do you feel that the Classics Illustrated publishing firm, being non-CMAA members, publishes material that might be unacceptable by Code standards?

WHENEVER A STORY, OR ITS TREATMENT, VIOLATES ANY TENET OR THE OVERALL PRINCIPLE OF THE CODE, NO MATTER WHAT ITS ORIGIN, WE ARE OBLIGED TO FIND IT UNACCEPTABLE. WE HAVE FOUND SUCH AN INSTANCE IN THE TREATMENT OF AN EDGAR ALLEN POE STORY IN A NON-MEMBER PUBLICATION NOT TOO LONG AGO.

(C.B.C.C.A.C. by Bill Spicer, cont.)

3) The CMAA appears to be concerned with comics publishing firms who have not, as yet, become members of your organization. Yet, in the instance of Gold Key and Dell, we see material that in no way differs from CCA approved comics. What advantage would these publishers gain in becoming affiliated with the CMAA?

ALL REPUTABLE MEMBERS OF THE INDUSTRY OWE IT AN OBLIGATION TO MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARDS OF DECENCY AND GOOD TASTE, NOT ONLY IN THEIR OWN PUBLICATIONS BUT IN ALL COMICS MAGAZINES. MOST CMAA MEMBERS DO NOT NEED CODE SUPERVISION, BUT THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE SELF-REGULATION PROGRAM GIVES IT THE STRENGTH AND PRESTIGE TO MAKE IT A SUCCESS. SHOULD THERE BE AN INFILTRATION OF BORDERLINE PUBLISHERS, ALL IN THE INDUSTRY, GOOD AND BAD, AS EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN, WILL BE TARRED WITH THE SAME BRUSH.

4) According to the CMAA Fact Booklet, 12% of the nations teachers, 16% of college graduates, and 25% of high school graduates read comics regularly. Why is it that no efforts are being made by publishers to capture a larger segment of this older group by offering more "mature" or specifically "non-Code" material?

IF YOU MEAN BY MORE "MATURE", UNRESTRICTED HORROR, TERROR AND CRIME COMICS, WE CANNOT AGREE THAT THEY WOULD BE "ADULT". MANY COMICS TODAY ARE OF INTEREST TO SOME ADULT READERS BECAUSE OF THEIR WIT, CHARM AND EASE OF READERSHIP.

5) The comic book medium is considered to be a genuine art form by many within the industry as well as students of this country's popular culture. Do you believe the full artistic potential of the medium can be realized under current rigidly-enforced standards of self-regulation?

DEFINITELY, YES. THE CODE DOES NOT RESTRICT IDEAS OR CREATIVITY. IT IS IN FACT A STIMULUS TO CREATIVITY.

6) Let us assume that a new publishing firm decided to market a "horror" or "terror" type comic book in the tradition of some pre-Code titles. What would be the chances of such a comic book becoming a successful seller? Would distribution problems be a major factor in marketing the book?

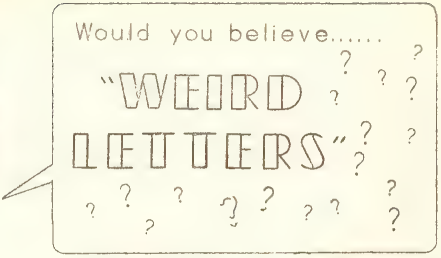
THE CMAA HAS NO POWER TO RESTRICT THE SALE OF COMICS BY WHOLESALERS AND RETAILERS OF THOSE OF ITS MEMBERS. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT MOST WHOLESALERS AND RETAILERS WOULD NOT WANT TO TAKE A CHANCE ON HANDLING HORROR OR TERROR TYPE COMICS BECAUSE OF COMMUNITY PRESSURES AND POSSIBLE LAW VIOLATIONS IN SOME STATES.

7) On view of constantly changing social conditions and attitudes, do you forsee any possibility that the CMAA's "Code For Editorial Matter" will be altered or made less restrictive than it is at present?

THERE IS ALWAYS A POSSIBILITY, OF COURSE, BUT WE HAVE FOUND THAT THE CODE STILL IS A WORKABLE DOCUMENT IN ITS PRESENT FORM.

—END—

//COMIC BOOKS CONTROVERSY CRISIS AND CENSORSHIP was originally published in the December (#25) issue of The Rocket's Blast. It has been reprinted here, with the permission of C.B. Love and Bill Spicer, in its original length, except slight editing in the interview. Ed.//



// Alright, you begged, pleaded, appealed, and demanded for it, so here, again, after an issue's absence, is WEIRDOM's letters column. Everone made me feel so bad for not including this column in the last issue, that I have decided to include letters concerning issue #8, and #7! Are you all satisfied now!?! Ahem! Ed.//

Dear Dennis,

That cover was magnificient. Dave caught our Heroe's likenesses perfectly. In fact, I had to do quite a lot of hunting to find something to knock. But I found it--I knew I would--Irma's foot's sort of poor. Seriously, though, very well done.

From what you said in your editorial, just the description of the firstish, I'd say it sounds a good deal better than most. //Oh, if only you knew! Ed.// Most first attempts by fans are pretty sad--mine being no exception. Even the amount of variety you had tops those I've seen. //Yeah, but you have not seen the first issue of WEIRDOM; the Gods were with you! Ed.//

Lauren Flemming's demolishing review of "Lost in Space" was justified, I feel. I've watched the program from time to time and found it to be every bit as bad as he says. At first, before I'd heard who was in the cast and all, I thought maybe it was based on the George O. Smith book of the same title. //No such luck! Ed.// That I recall, was good fun.

Since the return of my favorite program to CBS, "Secret Agent", I haven't been watching "Get Smart" any more. I don't know...but I'm

(cont. on next page)

getting tired of these satires on spies. It seems the take-offs far outnumber the serious attempts at good, exciting, Romantic-school drama. "Secret Agent" is the only show I can think of that at all resembles the Fleming books. And even then, Drake isn't by any means the hero James Bond is—though the black and white are kept nicely separate: you're never told that the good guys maybe aren't really much better than the bad guys, which always seems to be the case with anything nonsatirical. And as long as we're on the subject, your comments in "Saga of the Secret Agents" strikes me as rather ill-thought-out. I gather that you believe a large number of Bond fans go strictly—or at least mainly—for the gadgetry. //Yes, many do. Ed.// That's what Maibum, the screen-writer is always saying too. I think it's utter rubbish. The attraction is Sean Connery, who plays Bond as one hell of a dashing hero. //And may I add that Connery is a big bundle of gadgetry himself; or at least he seems to be. Ed.// (I was pleasently surprised when the boob-tube report on 007 brought that out) Bond is larger than life with whom it's great fun to identify oneself. Lord, man, you've got gadgets everywhere—and you've got silly joking asses everywhere. //I hope you aren't refering to me! Ed.// Bond is at his best when you're not laughing—like in Dr. No", when things are deadly serious and it's possible to slip into a world of danger and excitement, without being told to laugh as you do it. "The Man From U.N.C.L.E." is strictly for laughs, and, unfortunately, so was "Thunderball". If you have seen it, and I imagine you have, and also read the book, which I hope you have, the differences are obvious. //True. Ed.// The ending of the novel—the closing scene—was wonderful. "Thunderball" ended with stupid sensationalism. If any emotion was aroused, it certainly wasn't the one you felt in the novel, it was "Lord, but this is ridiculous!" Anyway, I've heard that filming of On Her Majesty's Secret Service has been put off in favor of You Only Live Twice. (Which should make this damn interesting since Blofeld gets killed off in Twice and will have to be resurrected for OHMSS.) I'm quite curious about how the book will be handled, as it's basically very downbeat. I can hardly imagine it being turned into a "Thunderball"-type comedy. But Maibum will no doubt try hard.

I didn't even buy The Day They Enveded New York. Believe it or not, the novel's just an expansion of a short story by Lewis that appeared back in July or August 1963 Analog. I remember it as being slightly amusing back then—but not much more.

Harold's magazine reviews were good. I think Creepy is getting into a rut with its vampires, werewolves, etc. //I agree here. Ed.// E.C. didn't have to depend on countless (increasingly trite) rehashes of these critters, and I think Creepy and Eerie would be a great deal better mags if they didn't either. //That's true, but I have a hunch that Warren is for some reason afraid to come out with that "EC type" material; instead he seems to be hinting at it. Ed.// The reason WEIRD is numbered 10 is because the publishers are liars. // I sort of gathered that from the start. Ed.// Neither I nor anyone else I know ever saw an issue before 10. And actually #11, out now, isn't much below Eerie #2. // While we're on the subject of Eerie, has anyone seen (or have a copy) of that Eerie #1 that was suposed to have come out in book form? I have a hunch they screwed-up on the numbering, and made up some half-ass excuse. Ed.// I'll have to admit that with Famous Monsters #37, Ackerman has brought things up to a level of bland mediocrity. I seriously doubt that things will ever progress beyond that point. //not with Warren as publisher. Ed.//

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You may attribute F.M.'s faults to Warren--you're probably right to some extent--but, after all, Ackerman is the editor and must take final responsibility for what appears in the mag. I can't see Warren having any serious objection to a display of a little intelligense. //Don't be so sure. We must remember too, that Ackerman is an employee (so to speak) of Warren, and he must follow planned procedures, or lose his job. Ackerman has already proved what he can do in certain back issues of F.M. and especially Spacemen. Ed.// Why should he? The kiddies that love the mag as it is won't know any better than to love it if it gets decent. //But then they won't be able to understand it without F.M.'s sensationalized artciles. Ed.//

Gene Klein's column was interesting. The accompanying illo wasn't much--but the review made it tollerable.

What can I say about the fanzine reviews? Thanks maybe. Seriously though, I'm not all that outspoken. You're quite right on the matter of my story for FFJ. I remember that T.Z. story--but I didn't see any real similarities until after I'd written the story. My original intention was to do a J.G. Ballard type piece, throwing my hero into a situation that was totally alien as I could make it. I'm afraid I failed. Beyond that, however, toys in a Salvation Army collection drum and human beings in an alien's stew pot don't strike me as very similar ideas.

Harold really goes for those monsters with personalitiesm huh? Not having seen the flick in question, I'm rather curious to know how the bums "argued". With voices? Or maybe running on the bottom of the screen? Wonder who they had to translate pterydoctyl-talk to moth to big lizard? Or maybe they all spoke Japanese? Or English? Harold's suggestion that you just sit back and relax and don't be critical and all rings faintly (well, not too faintly) of the same attitude as Dave Szurek expressed concerning "Horror of Party Beach" an accompanying attrocity in SPECTRE. As long as your brains on vacation, the flick's enjoyable.

I agree that "First Men In the Moon" was quite a film. Those actors-made-up type Selenites weren't very convincing (looked more like the Sherwood Forest gang), but special effects were the best I've seen.

I guess I sort of asked for those one-page horrors, didn't I? //You sure did. Ed.// Really though, I love that sort of thing. The sicker the better. //This isuues WEIRDER SIDE OF WEIRDOM isn't very sick (or is it?), but there will be more in upcoming issues! Ed.//

Lauren Fleming looks just like I'd always imagined him.

I can't see what Gene Klein could have against a dog taking a leak on a fanzine cover. He turns out some that are pretty pissy to start with. (JOKE GENE!)

Considering the way I feel about Hurbert Humphrey, I was understandably happy to learn he's being guarded by U.N.C.L.E. fans. Now if we could only get old Solo and Kuryakin themselves on the job, we wouldn't have to worry about it running in '72!

John C. Boland
Editor of The Solarite
Moline, Illinois

(cont. on next page)

Dear Dennis,

WEIRDOM is not my favorite type of magazine (of which COF is a good example), but it has enough fantasy-film-slanted articles to interest me. The only grammatical error that occurs often enough to irk me is the use of "it's" for "its", otherwise fine in the grammar dept. The letters seem to be primarily from other "fanzine" publishers; are they the only readers who write or are they the only readers? //Publishers are neither my only readers or the only people who write. As it usually turns out though, they are the ones who write the best letters. Most other readers send along letters that praise every issue. This is fine, but I don't print this type of letters. Ed.// (I don't publish one; print this and break a precedent!) //Okay! Ed.// Thumbing and index-fingering through the January issue, I first find a 4-page Editorial Introduction—long but worthwhile. The TV reviews were very fair. Too fair in the case of I Dream of Jeannie; the two shows I saw should have been left in the bottle. The excerpts from Get Smart! were choice. (Is it about time for a new paragraph?) //Yeah! Ed.//

The book and magazine reviews, okeh (would you know if Screen Thrills Illustrated is defunct?) //Yes it is, but all of the back issues are available for $1.00 each through Warren Publishing Company. Ed.//

The Ghidrah (I'm getting tired of underlining with this defective typewriter) review focused interesting observations and criticisms rather than mere plot-recap, making it superior to even the filmbooks (which would be useless without the stills) of Ye Olde(-st?) Monster Magazine.

Why do you have it in for Santa Clause (Christmas Dinner, Chimnet Sweep)? //It's an old chidhood obsession! Ed.// I have nothing in particular about badly written comics, but it took me quite a while to figure out that "undog" was "unclog". The First Men In the Moon artcile was one of my favorite things. //Why thanx! Ed.//

Donald Willis
Sacramento, Calif.

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/I had received many, many more letters concerning the 7th issue, but space doesn't permit me printing them. Now on to a few comments on the last issue.... Ed.//

Dear Dennis,

WEIRDOM #8 was a tremendous disapointment to me. The last issue I read, #7, had a nice long editorial, a feature I really dig in a zine, a long letter col which was very interesting, plus many various features. But #8 had actually only three main features, and a small number of columns. I'm very glad to hear that you'll be expanding again with your next issue, as this is the way I like your mag. I won't mind the switch in price to two bits as long as the quality of the features are worthwhile. //I think you'll agree that this issue has come up to those standards. Ed.//

Your reproduction on mimeo is fine, quite a lot better than a lot of mimeoed trys at publishing that I've seen before. It's too bad you're going mimeo, though, as I dug the color you used to use in your dittoed pages. //I will be having more colored work in the

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near future, Ed.//

Your cover was fine; a very nice photo, (though not being in the know as far as S.F. and horror films go, I had no idea who the photographed fellow was until I read further on in the zine) and it came out fine in the reproduction process. Was that photo-offset or photo-stencil? //It was photo-stencil. I could have had better reproduction if I had screened the pic for half-tones, but I didn't know about that sort of thing three months ago. Ed.//

Your editorial...what can I say except that it was far too short to mean anything. I do hope that with the rising price, the editorial will expand to at least its former length.

Johnny Chambers' article on "SADISM IN COMICS" was well done, though I'd read it before. He's a fine writer and it would be nice if you got more material from him in the future.

The continued reviews of TV's Terror shows (the Double Life of Henry Phyfe a terror show? I'll admit it's terrible, but...) were interesting as usual, but nothing more than the reviews in TV GUIDE of TV shows each week. Still, I enjoy Lauren's style of writing, and I look forward to his reviews of THE BARON, BLUE LIGHT, and THE AVENGERS. //Sorry, Lauren's article has been canceled for a number of various reasons. Ed.//

No offense meant to Don W., but someone had better tell him how to draw girls better before he tries anything like that drawing of Andress again. (Not that I could do better, but I'd gladly give a try if you need an artist...) //Thanx for the offer; maybe I'll take you up on it sometime. Ed.// The SHE review itself was partially lost to me, because as I've explained to you before, Dennis, I don't like story narration unless it's strictly essential to an article. It's true that writer Sommerfeldt also commented on acting, special FX, etc., but to me this seemed to be an addition to the main purpose of the article, which seemed to be reviewing the film's storyline.

'66 Movie Preview was interesting and a feature which should definitely be continued, though it's certainly not a hard feature to research and write up, because if one reads VARIETY regularly, they feature a long column that has the production schedule for every filming company.

So in summing up the issue this time, I feel that not enough interesting material was presented, and I'm glad to hear you're reverting to your former style, as this should make your mag 100% better than this issue was.

Jeff Gelb
Editor of
Men of Mystery

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Dear Dennis,

I suppose the switching from ditto to mimeo provided a welcome to some, //I don't think so. Ed.// but since WEIRDOM has such ___damn nice repro, I was sort of sorry to see mimeo take over most of the pages in WEIRDOM. Don't get me wrong. The repro is excellent, but I still long for ditto...maybe it's because of the color, maybe it's because I was never able to reach the heights you have in repro, or maybe it's something else that I can't explain, but I'd like ditto to come back again. //Okay! Ed.//

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The cover was fine, I guess, and no offence to Mr. Langdon, but I thought the backcover was much more interesting. //I don't think Mr. Langdon will take any offense to your comment. Who would want to look like that fellow on the backcover anyway?!? Ed.// That piece is definetely the best I've seen from Rogers. Quite humerous as well, I might add.

Contents on the whole were fine. But if I wasn't so bogged down with work (answering mail, loc-ing zines, working on C.S. and Wolfbane for Dupree's MAPA), I'd probably write some sort of rebutal to Johnny Chambers Sadism.... There's nothing wrong with sadism (or sadists) in comics, if in the end the 'good' wins. //I agree, and if you'll remember, E.C. always had the 'evil' pay for their crimes. Ed.// And if this be the case, I can't see why the Comics Code would bar anything that justifies 'good'. //I think you'll find some of the answers to this (and other questions) in 11 page article, COMIC BOOKS CONTROVERSY CRISIS AND CENSORSHIP, in this issue. Ed.// Granted, the very presence of the Comic Code forced companies to put out better products, // Not in the case of E.C.! Ed.//but I feel the Code is far too strict when it comes to sex, sadism, and the sort....comments?

The biggest fault with WEIRDOM #8, was of course the absence of the lettercol. This is a necessary aspect of any zine, and if a zine doesn't have one, it does not fullfill its entire purpose--to entertain, or to interest, and while it's true that WEIRDOM is a very interesting zine, there's a heck of a lot missing if you don't have a letter column. The least you could've done was to mention those that wrote. God, you can even discourage loc-writers by doing that...and then where would you be? //In the eternal fires of Hell! No, really Gene, "cross my heart-hope to die--stick a needle in my eye (you sadistic devil!) I promise to always have a letters column!" Ed.//

Gene Klein
Editor of,
Cosmos Stiletto

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Dear Dennis,

The cover...well...was unusual. It was a bit different from the average fanmag cover and for that reason I enjoyed it. The mimeographing throughout was very good except for a few spots but I guess one can expect this because it's your first time at that printing process. //And here it's my second try, and I still haven't improved any-- problems, problems! Ed.// Photo repro was very poor, save for the cover, that is. Williamson's art wasn't up to par, but Rogers saved the mag with his bits of artwork here and there. Since I had never had the pleasure of reading Chambers' article before. I found it a good deal interesting and informative. I can't say that I agree with his opinions, however, since I do enjoy those E.C.'s and horror comic mags that I can lay my hands on. Wertham would love this guy, all right. As usual, Flemming scored with his brief critiques of the TV terror shows, and, on the whole, I agreed with his remarks except for a few unsavory remarks about BATMAN. Harold Sommerfeldt spent a great deal of words in describing the progress of SHE, and even though it became a bit tiresome after the first two chapters, I found it interesting

(cont. on next page)

because of his comments at the end of the chapter. The best foto in the mag was the one of Miss Andress on the second page of the SHE article. Duvoli's film preview was interesting and enlightening.

Mike Appel
Editor of
Spectre

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Well there you have it. I have received many more letters, but space doesn't permit my publishing them. Those who wrote letters were: Harold Sommerfeldt; Martin Boire; Marvin Wolfman; Harry Wasserman; Jurgen Wolf; Dave Ludwig; Pat Gabe; Robert M. Allen; Jeff Day; Chuck Rogers, and I don't know who else. Those I left out; sorry! Oh yes, one more thing; be sure to LoC on this issue!——Ed.

—END—

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